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ABSTRACT

A colloquium on self-assessment of postsecondary programs was held for colleges interested in developing self-assessment beyond what is included for the accreditation process. The colloquium was attended by almost all of the 15 colleges that were members of the Task Force on Self-Assessment for New York State. Topics of the meeting included: the role of self-assessment in institutional planning and change, the budgetary and staff support that make self-assessment continuous, the use of consultants and other resources for objective review, ways to ensure that self-assessment will result in decisions and action, and the relation of self-assessment to accreditation. An address entitled "Concern for Self-Assessment," by Robert A. Plane, was followed by a panel discussion by the following university representatives: Richard Alfred, Rita Arthur, Ronald C. Brach, Joseph Burke, William Dempsey, and Vincent Toscano. Discussions were also held separately for liberal arts colleges, large colleges and universities, two-year colleges, and technical colleges. Alvin P. Lierheimer spoke on "Accreditation and Self-Assessment," and five workshops were held. Two workshops on long-range planning concerned program reorganization and staff development, and identifying goals and the value of a data base. Two workshops on curricular review concerned developing a continuous system and emphasizing outcomes. The final workshop was on gathering institutional support for self-assessment. (SW)

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Report of the
INVITATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON
SELF-ASSESSMENT OF POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS

Sponsored by
the Regents' Project on

SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

on November 3, 1977
Albany, New York

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SELF-ASSESSMENT
FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Edited by
DONALD TRITSCHLER

HE 010 924

FOREWARD

As you know, there are heavy demands on colleges and universities all over the nation. Students want evidence that higher education improves their job opportunities as well as their intellectual growth. Parents want to know why costs are so high. The public at large questions the merit and appropriateness of individual programs. And each State wants to insure academic quality.

Accountability is the key word. Colleges and universities must be accountable to these increasingly demanding constituencies which are taking an unprecedented interest in higher education. Whether or not all the demands made are appropriate--and there is room for dissent here--institutions must examine the results of their efforts. The question then is, how to go about it?

Self-assessment is an answer. Rather than have others evaluate programs and attitudes, colleges are being asked to do it themselves. This was always a hope. Now it is a pressing need. Those institutions who embark on a self-study will find many desirable results.

In order to assist institutions in grappling with the difficulties of self-assessment, the New York State Education Department designed a project financed through a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. In 1976 an informational meeting was held from which evolved thirty-one proposals by colleges who applied to participate in an experimental project sponsored by the Department. Of these, nine were chosen to receive Federal funds. One sign of the strong interest in self-assessment is the fact that six other colleges not receiving funding joined the project.

The basic question is how to do it. The project is one of many possible answers. We hope it will be a very useful one.

Hadley S. DePuy
Duputy Commissioner for
Higher and Professional Education

December 1977

Invitational Colloquium on Self-Assessment of Postsecondary Programs
State University of New York at Albany - Campus Center

A G E N D A

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8:00	Registration Coffee and Danish	
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	Robert A. Plane, President Clarkson College of Technology "Concern for Self-Assessment"	2-6
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9:45	Forum led by panel and open to the floor for discussion of self-assessment issues.	6-9
10:30	Coffee Break	
10:45	Discussions among similar Institutions.	9
	Liberal Arts Colleges	10
	Large Colleges and University	10-11
	Two-Year Colleges	11
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12:00	Luncheon	
1:15 1:45	Alvin P. Lierheimer Associate Commissioner for Higher Education "Accreditation and Self-Assessment"	12-15
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	1) Program Reorganization and Staff Development	15-16
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		Pages
2:00	Five Workshops (Cont'd):	
	Curricular Review (2)	
	1) Developing a Continuous System	16-17
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	Gathering Institutionsl Support for Self-Assessment (1)	17-18
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3:30-5:00	Social: Wine and Cheese Selection	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Invitations to this Colloquium were extended to colleges known to have a strong interest in developing self-assessment beyond what they already do for the accreditation process. We are glad they joined in this effort to involve them in assessment of their own accomplishments. We believe that they will be much more likely to plan and act on what they convince themselves they must do to enhance the quality of their academic programs.

I have been impressed by the strong and sustained interest in the project by all who are involved in it. I am proud of the accomplishments of the New York State Task Force on Self-Assessment, which represents the 15 colleges in the project, and I am grateful that so many of them came to this Colloquium to help spread self-assessment among other colleges. The project is indebted to the speakers and the panel members and workshop moderators who shared their knowledge of self-assessment with us. Liaison staff in the Bureau of College Evaluation have been generous in their suggestions and the time they have given to the project, and the National Advisory Council has joined many of the project's activities and provided the wisdom to sustain it.

More immediately, we all owe special thanks to the two people who produced this Colloquium. Leslie Ann Bechtel, the Project Assistant, not only planned it to the last of its myriad details--so well that she could be away during the Colloquium at the Fund's meeting for project directors--but she also suggested many practical ways to facilitate the discussions which follow. Most deserving of our thanks is Patricia Weingartner, the Project Secretary, who produced the many letters and mailings, sometimes under much pressure from deadlines, which put all of these preparations perfectly in place.

"The visitation too often comes after the crucial events."

THE PURPOSE OF THE COLLOQUIUM

We are here today to share experiences and concerns and ideas about self-assessment. Almost all of the Task Force Members in our project on Self-Assessment for Colleges and Universities are here and will share their experiences of the past year in building models of self-assessment. During the first year, our 15 colleges worked on three of the four objectives which were originally proposed to the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education, and which we find have guided us very well. They worked to (1) establish a conviction of need for self-assessment on their campuses, (2) develop techniques of self-assessment, and (3) help faculty and staff become effective evaluators of their own work. The projects have been evaluated in recent weeks by outside reviewers to estimate the effectiveness of self-assessment. Now the 15 colleges are turning to the fourth objective of the project, which is decision-making and action based on self-assessment findings.

As we prepared for this Colloquium, we learned with little surprise, that some of you have varying amounts, even considerable experience in self-assessment. An example of this is participation by one person outside our Task Force, a college that we had not known was engaged in self-assessment, as a resource person on our program today. We certainly don't feel that we have a corner on this particular endeavor, but we would like to help all of you get as much as possible out of your efforts.

Today we want to examine the ingredients of self-assessment: the role it plays in institutional planning and change, the budgetary and staff support which make self-assessment continuous, the use of consultants and other resources for objective review, ways to ensure that self-assessment will result in decisions and action, the relation of self-assessment to accreditation. And we hope that our work together will inspire you to do self-assessment and to spread the idea on your campuses.

We begin our program with a person who has many interests which we share, and some we would like to share. After we selected the nine pilot colleges last October, the liaison staff from the Department visited each member of the Task Force. Since I am liaison to Clarkson, I visited there for the first time sligthly over a year ago. I wanted to become better acquainted with Gordon Lindsey and his colleagues, and if possible see the President to show the Department's priority of encouraging self-assessment. I hoped I would be able to win Mr. Plane's involvement in the self-assessment project, for one of our first tenets for success is securing support from the top. When I went into his office, I hardly got beyond the introduction before Bob told me in his businesslike and articulate way of his long-standing concern for evaluation. There was no need for me to go through our suggestions of things for him to do. He told me what he wanted to do with this project. That was one more reason for me to admire and appreciate Bob Plane.

"Concern for Self Assessment"
by Robert A. Plane

Thank you, Don. I should quit right now. You've used the phrase, "a concern for," rather than "knowledge of" the process of self-assessment. "Concern" best describes my commitment to evaluation of college programs. If I do nothing else, I hope that I am going to worry us all a little bit with an area that has indeed concerned me for a long time.

In thinking about these remarks, I decided that my interests go back almost 30 years to the time when I was a graduate student at the University of Chicago. At that time our leader, much admired by all the students there, Robert Hutchins, was engaged in a more or less constant debate with President Conant of Harvard. It ended with Hutchins' wonderful phrase that "the University of Chicago is not a very great university, simply the best there is." His phrase has raised all sorts of questions that are still with me after 30 years. First of all, how do you compare Institution A with Institution B, and even more difficult, how do you set absolute standards? Mr. Hutchins was clearly uneasy with them, having them barely met by even the best there is.

The problem, one way or another, comes down to an assessment of quality. One of the best books I have read in many years is Robert Percig's Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance. I'll give you the theme and then urge you to read it. Percig is deeply troubled by how one measures quality. In fact, his conclusion is that although nearly anyone can recognize quality, nobody can define quality. Now I don't want us to take a hopeless view, but some qualitative judgments are going to have to be made along the way. I don't want us to fall into the trap of thinking that anything we can put in numbers is therefore somehow more intellectual, more scholarly, more objective than those things that we can't always assign numbers to.

When one then talks about these qualitative judgments in terms of self-assessment, the whole problem becomes even more difficult. In fact, I am reminded of a recent Yogi Berra phrase, You will recall the Yankees were up three games to one over Los Angeles and Tommy LaSorda said that it wasn't all lost, and in fact that he felt Los Angeles would win the next three games and thereby take the World Series. When asked to comment on this, Yogi said, "I can comment on that in just two words, Im-possible." Those same two words may be ones that could discourage us about what we are about to do. But let me first take the two words "Self-Assessment" and talk a little bit about the self part before getting to the harder part.

By our insisting on self-assessment, we're making the job more difficult for ourselves because of the problem of lack of objectivity. But that should not discourage us in the slightest because there are positive reasons that more than compensate for the difficulties of being objective. First of all, if we want anything to happen, and after all, I hope that is what our self-assessment is all about, we had better have it a self-exercise. And secondly, if we really want to get at the heart of our institutions, we are going to have to involve those of us who know the most about the institution. It is like the old argument for introspective physchology: it's not so objective, but if you don't study your own mind, you've thrown away your only real data.

Furthermore I am not totally convinced that this subjective-objective argument is as strong as it might sound. I would assert that even in my own field of chemistry, scholarship is much more subjective than most believe. Scientists follow hunches and do their best to test them. In fact, I am convinced that good and interesting scholarship is frequently subjective, and the more subjective, the more interesting, and more lively. People in academic life have learned to deal with subjectivity. All of our fields have certain ground rules, certain criteria, certain boundary conditions to

keep our subjectivity channeled. If we can establish those ground rules, those boundary conditions, then I am not at all concerned about subjectivity.

I does, however, put greater stress on our criteria, and this is what scares me more than anything. From what I've seen through these 30 years, as I've watched exercises in assessment--specifically, in accreditation--I get increasingly worried about the trends that have developed. I think partly because we are trying to be overly objective, we all too quickly leap to what are the measurable ingredients that make up the institution, instead of looking at what comes out of the institution. It's almost as though we are trying to analyze art by discussing the quality of the paint and the brushes that went into creation of the masterpiece. I don't think that's the way that we evaluate art; I hope that it is not the way we evaluate institutions.

Let me give you two examples, two things that happened to me this year on accrediting visits that point out why I am so concerned. We get accredited frequently, being a professional school, and one of the professional groups was with us this past year. Just before they came into my office for their terminal visit, they had a meeting with some of our students. They came in bubbling over with praise for these students and how bright and lively and able they were and how enthusiastic they were about their programs.

I said, "Well I guess then that that is what you are going to tell me, and that it is all over."

They said, "No, that's irrelevant. What we really want to talk to you about is one of your professors. We are worried about the terminal qualifications of that Professor." They noted that he had a PhD from Harvard and that he had over 100 publications in the field in which he was professing. But their concern was that when he was at Harvard 40 years ago, the subject he was not teaching was his minor subject, not his major subject. And on this, it seemed, our accreditation was going to rise or fall. Fortunately it didn't, but the fact that the question was even raised, the fact that even though we had information on the quality of this particular person which was absolutely ignored was upsetting.

The other example occurred when our whole institution was evaluated. There were a couple of beautiful sentences in that report, and they were on the subject of student life. They said that the quality of the programs and student enthusiasm were all excellent--the typical accrediting technique of saying some good things first--but then came the other shoe: However, this excellence should not give any comfort to the administration. They should be concerned that there is no visible, strong leadership. In responding to that, I wrote back that the excellence of our program gave me no concern whatsoever, that as far as I knew, the reason that it was excellent was because of the lack of visibly strong leadership (but I noticed that the same phrases stayed in the final report).

In other words, I am making a very strong plea for assessment of the quality of a college's accomplishments. One of these examples shows more concern about the administrative structure for campus life than about the quality of campus life. The other makes the forty-year-ago credentials of a professor more important than what his students said about him, or how he performed his scholarship. All too often the accreditation goes totally on inputs such as the qualification of the faculty, the administrative structure, dollars that go into this or that, the number of volumes that are in the library without any regard to how much use they get, the concern about the SAT scores of entering students without any concern about what they might have learned by graduation time.

We must, it seems to me, if we are going to assess the value of our educational institutions, find what it is we are doing for our students while they are with us. What difference did we make in their lives.

This is the point from which we at Clarkson departed as we started working. Our first question was, How do you determine what you have done for students? But I can't honestly think that it was a great idea to bring 18-year-olds to a campus to be educated and then go partway through and say, Are you educated? Did you like it? How did it go?

Another possibility is to ask the faculty, What kind of a job did you do? That one concerns me a bit too, and let me note that one of the outcomes of our little study was that if you take what I consider a better criterion, the faculty are farther off than the senior students when asked the same question. And that is understandable. After all, we faculty (and I still think of myself that way) were trained to be faculty members. We all too often train our students to be just like us. Certainly in the years ahead there are not going to be many openings for people just like us, and so we have got to give up that notion.

Then we thought of another group it was important to ask. But let me tell you what really spawned this. I was at an annual meeting of a group of presidents of colleges like ours. I asked this question of the group: How do you measure your outputs, how do you measure the success of your institution? I was shocked when one of the most senior members of that group looked at me right in the eye and said, "We look at the grades."

I said, "Well, that must give you great comfort; I'm sure that your grades went up the way everybody else's did, so you're doing a wonderful job as President, aren't you."

He saw the point, but then he said, "What we really do is to look at the success of graduation."

Unfortunately, that is open to the same objection. After all, we set graduation requirements and can move them up and down. Then out of our discussion we identified an objective group that looks at the outcome: the recruiters who hire our students. So one of the groups that we have involved in our study is the recruiters who come on campus, and we asked them what are important dimensions of the education we offer.

Finally, the source that I guess is my favorite of all, is to ask the alumni. After all, that is our real output. Furthermore, they have had a chance to reflect, they've had a chance after being out to compare themselves with people who have come through different institutions. Interestingly, the recruiters gave almost the same priorities for education as did our alumni. I am going to mention some results and I will show you where they slightly disagree.

We tried a little trick in our study--our thought of not taking all alumni responses with equal seriousness. After all, we have some very successful alumni and some not so successful alumni. What we did was to ask them as part of our questionnaire to rank their own success in life on several dimensions: in fulfilling their own aspirations for success, in comparison with the colleagues with whom they work, and finally in terms of the profession in which they are part. And just to make sure that they weren't overly generous to themselves, we put in a few little checkpoints like salary, and we found a wonderful correlation. We managed to divide the alumni respondents into three groups--the group which was most successful, a middle group, and the least successful--and we compared their answers.

Let me say a word or two about what we were looking for. We were looking for the dimensions in which a college education is important in making for success. Competencies, if you like that word, though I would rather call it the components of a college education. We asked them to rank these components relative to each other in order of importance. We found a checkpoint that we called technical knowledge. In other words, something a little broader than subject matter mastery, but that which most people assume they are going to college for. An interesting fact is

that in all of our groups of alumni--we check classes out 10, 15, 20, 25 years--none of them put technical knowledge first. The more successful alumni put it lower on their list than the less successful. It was in the top five out of fourteen, so it was in the upper third for everybody, but if a person was more successful, he found other things that were more important to him or her than was technical knowledge.

The one that was first on all of the alumni lists, and again the most enthusiasm was by the most successful, was communications skills. Now you can hardly pick up a newspaper without reading about the illiteracy of college graduates. But the responses were saying much more than that. They were saying that we should have an open-ended scale of mastery, that indeed greater skill in communications is going to make for greater success in later life. So we learned that whatever else we do in the future, we should put great emphasis on how well we are helping the communications problem, and not just in the English class. We should focus on communication of engineer to engineer, engineer to manager, and so on.

Of the other items which ranked high on everybody's list, there was only one more that all groups, recruiters, faculty, senior students, and all groups of alumni put in the top five. This was independence of problem solving. I'm afraid it is a topic we do not do an awful lot with. All too infrequently do we really reward imaginative solutions to problems. The amount of imagination shown is not something that we look for on problem 13. We look for the right answer. Somehow the notion of solving things on your own, maybe problems where there are no right or wrong answers, was important to respondents.

Another component came out on top--and this was the one where the recruiters were different from the rest. Every other group put in the top five the skills in acquiring and handling information, or in other words, using the library. Peter Drucker has said that we are entering the information age and all of us know how hard it is to keep abreast in whatever field we are trying to keep abreast of. Everyone saw that as a problem, the recruiters a little less, though, than the other groups.

One more final bit of this and then I will get on with my final thought, and that is the difference between the most successful alumni and the least successful alumni, and this is a little tricky because there are changes that go with time. If you're 20 years out, that very fact is the most important factor, and a secondary factor will be the differences based on your success level. The one general result, the pattern that was more important than the changes in time, was the following. Every one of our 14 questions tended to fall into one of two classes. The first class was a sort of do-it-yourself requiring technical knowledge and related laboratory exercises, applied courses, etc. All of these course-work type things were rated much higher for the least successful group. The most successful group put those lower and put higher various cooperative exercises-like communication, understanding organizational behavior, understanding how one's profession interacted with society at large. Anything that had to do with functioning in a group seemed to be more important for the successful than for the least successful people.

This again gives us something to think about, I suspect that a lot of our education goes in the wrong direction. We don't even pretend to reward cooperative efforts on, say final examinations. We tend in fact to educate loners. But in order to be able to evaluate and grade and make distinctions, we might be killing one of the most important things that we indeed ought to be teaching. That will make some evaluation problems for us, but if that is the fact, so be it.

Let me just summarize by saying we've been hearing a lot recently about being cost-effective. We are going to hear an awful lot more about that in the future.

But let me say that those of us who do get our hair standing on end when we hear "cost-effective" haven't listened to the whole phrase. Don't get hung up on the cost and forgot there is an effective that comes after it. The other word that at least pleases the faculty mind is efficiency. I like to point out that efficiency is a fraction. It is an accomplishment in a numerator, and cost in the denominator; let's look at the numerator for a while. Look at the accomplishment, look at the positive part. That is why self-assessment, assessment of quality is what we are doing. The only way to take the onus off the dollars, the only way to move beyond the cost in the cost-effectiveness phrase, is for us to work hard on the value side of the ledger. It is a lot harder than measurement of cost. I am firmly convinced, however, that if we are unable to assess the effectiveness of our own institutions, society at large will nickel and dime us to death.

Thank you very much.

FORUM ON SELF-ASSESSMENT

Introductions

I know that Bob's speech has helped us organize our ideas about self-assessment, and I hope it will inspire you to join the panel in discussing them. Our program today is planned to involve you as much as possible, so that you have an opportunity to examine your ideas and concerns about self-assessment and perhaps be enlightened by the experience of others. I asked the panel not to prepare set speeches because I want their part of the program to be a colloquy with each other and with you. I have only asked them to be ready with some examples from their experience. That experience should be valuable, since each of them has unique concerns in self-assessment. They represent different perspectives and approaches to the problem.

Dick Alfred represents a college outside our project. As Director of Educational Research and Development at New York City Community College, he has developed an impressive data bank on program need, enrollments, attrition, and outcomes, and he has also prepared a master plan for institutional research at New York City Community College. I was so impressed with his work that I asked him to be part of our panel this morning. If I know Dick, he also came because he thought that he could learn from his discussions with you.

Rita Arthur is Director of Research and Planning at Marymount Manhattan College and a member of our Task Force who is assessing the effect of the large shift to part-time students in a liberal arts institution. Also the Assistant to the President there, Rita has pulled together a winning proposal by the College for a large Advanced Institutional Development Program grant.

Another person within the self-assessment project is Ron Brach, who is responsible as the Director of Research and Planning for evaluation of all programs offered by SUNY at Delhi. As is typical of Ron and his institution, this plan was conceived long before the SUNY Central Office mandated such programs and evaluations, a procedure which many of you are familiar with. Furthermore, Delhi's program evaluations follow a significant effort in faculty development which has been running for several years. In view of Delhi's commitment to self-assessment, we invited the College to join the project as an associate. Ron's office has provided many additional services to the College, one of the most interesting of which is his study of the educational influence of dormitory life on students. That study should be interesting to many of us.

Joseph Burke, President of SUNY at Plattsburgh, a pilot college in our project, has had available to him a great quantity of information about program quality and costs, since Plattsburgh has been one of the leaders in the testing of instruments developed by the National Commission for Higher Education Management Systems. His problem has been to absorb all of this information and to put it to the most effective use.

And the person who has given him the problem is the next panel member, Bill Dempsey. When he was the Assistant to the President for Analytical Studies and Long Range Planning, he could present Joe with nearly all the operational models of the NCHEMS costing instruments when Joe became president of Plattsburgh in 1974, and Bill was already improving on the NCHEMS outcomes instruments when Plattsburgh joined our project. Bill immediately set to work to use his outcome data as part of an attempt to measure educational value added, an effort which appears in the current issue of the State Education Department's publication of Postsecondary Education in New York State (PS). Bill is one of the two original members of our project's Task Force who went on to even more challenging tasks during our first year--he is now Vice President for Finance and Management at SUNY New Paltz.

Vince Toscano, another member of our Task Force from an associate college, started from scratch on self-assessment as Director of Learning Resources at Marist College. He has worked especially on the first objective of the program: to help win broad support within the college for faculty and staff evaluation and development.

I have mentioned pilot and associate colleges without explanation, and that slight distinction is simple, pilot colleges are the nine which we were able to fund. Our National Advisory Council selected them last fall from 31 applications to receive up to $4,000 under our grant from The Fund. Associate colleges decided to join the project without funding, and I think that the accomplishments of both groups, which together make up our Task Force colleges, show how much can be done with the proper institutional support. I know that the colleges in both categories have put more into self-assessment than our modest grant could cover.

Panel Discussion With the Colloquium's Participants (P)

P: Can someone rank the indicators of effectiveness of academic programs? Certain groups' opinions were found by Clarkson to be valuable.

Brach: It depends on whom you are trying to measure quality for. An external audit will be different from the self-assessment you do for yourself. At Clarkson, problem-solving was important, but at a liberal arts institution or at a large university there may be other major purposes.

P: Then quality is relevant to the questioner and also to the particular type of program and type of institution.

Plane: True, the data I presented was only from engineers. Furthermore, a high percentage of our students are from first generation families and from middleclass backgrounds. The quality added for these people won't be the same as for people with other backgrounds. One reason we were so interested in what the recruiters thought is that their interests are what so many of our students have always been interested in. I would be concerned if we all came out

with some general, overall quality criteria. It would be like the Harvard Redbook, which Harvard never adopted, but every other school in the country did.

Burke: We should concentrate on the positive things that can happen to a department or faculty as a result of the information which we give them. We tend to use this information to support the realities of the present "steady state" of education, a stagnated economy, so I find [illegible] to emphasize the positive to my [illegible]. We should try to help our stud[illegible] life situations, situation[illegible] not come as true-false questio[illegible] or as a list of statements, one of w[illegible] is the "right" one.

P: One of the key issues I hear people talking about and I should like the panel and others to address is developing appropriate institutional goals or outcomes. As a physicist, I know that the questions posed must be very clear. The problem is the process by which to establish institutional goals. We suffer from our belief that education, and every college in particular, must provide everything for the individual to deal with life. I would like to know how we go about establishing appropriate and realistic goals?

Alfred: Whose goals are they? Management's? The community's? Goals for accreditation? Why are we so interested in evaluation all of a sudden? Necessity first, perhaps social conscience second, but nevertheless we have developed several rather precise means for establishing goals--delphi technique, institutional inventories, etc.--in the last 10 years. Necessities such as our 20% budget cut in one year have brought about things that never would have been accomplished before. Goal-setting and objective-setting, for example, never would have been done in earnest without the external stress.

Burke: As a new president, I thought we had to have very clear goals and objectives, but then I scratched that effort. I found that we were developing an elaborate core curriculum to express those goals. Instead of the deductive method of goal-setting, I feel we need to procede much more inductively. That's the difficulty when we talk about outcomes. Our goals begin to emerge inductively as we look at the findings of our evaluations. We aren't going to have the clear, laboratory conditions to define our parameters.

Tritschler: Bob is going after goals by asking recruiters and others what Clarkson's graduates use of their education and what they need. This may not have been the purpose of his surveys, but curricular directions have certainly been indicated by the findings.

Plane: We have to decide which of many possible needs we will serve. We are making decisions to serve students who are not even in college yet.

P: Precise definition of goals is appealing, but it can get away from us. Perhaps the inductive approach is best. Perhaps we don't always want to make precise measurements. Professional outcomes can be defined more precisely than liberal arts outcomes.

P: What I seem to have heard in this conversation is our desire to help our students cope with ambiguity. But this brings me back to Dr. Plane's first point that everyone can identify quality but no one can define it.

P: We tend to use the words goals and hypotheses interchangeably, and we are now beginning to see that they are not in all cases interchangeable. Goals may sometimes yield hypotheses, but so also do data. What we need to do is test the hypotheses.

Brach: We should take care not to let the attempt to institutionalize goals kill the process of goal-development, a changing situation which we do best to approach inductively.

Dempsey: Are there any ways we can estimate what impact an institution has on one's larger life--without, of course, arrogating too much importance to our impact?

Plane: We are studying this in conjunction with Worcester Polytechnic. While our students and the subjects they study are very similar, our approaches are very different. Students haven't seen a great difference in the curricula; we don't have all the alumni information yet. The only way I can see to do that is to take similar institutions with the same kinds of inputs and different kinds of programs, and then compare the outcomes.

Toscano: As a beginner in self-assessment at Marist College, which is new to the process, I was overwhelmed by the literature of self-assessment--the conflict over defining quality, the question of goals, the variety of instruments that were available--but it has struck me lately that self-assessment is not so much a question of data as it is a human problem. It is often a matter of generating information and support for the nature of our institution. Its greatest value is in generating the kinds of consensus which an institution needs to survive. This can't be imposed by an external sense of quality or perfection. It comes from an ongoing dialogue in which each individual wants to find ways to do his work even better, and for larger purposes. I thought my struggle to generate data was the most important part of the battle. Now I find that the interpretation and the manner in which it is used is probably the most significant.

Perhaps we are saying here that the quality standards of a particular institution must be reviewed because they change. Our project at Marist College is on evaluation of teaching, teaching in an institution which is changing. If you think it is difficult to define institutional outcomes, you should see how difficult it is to define accomplishment in the teaching done by individuals, because teaching is a very personal process. Self-assessment for me, then, has not so much been an exercise in technique and/or statistical analysis as it is an experience in human interaction, communication, development of a sense of identity for a particular institution at a particular time, in a particular place. In this light, the search for an instrument to measure quality may be presumptuous.

P: I question this reluctance to define goals, for they help us keep our focus on our priorities.

Arthur: In our urban liberal arts college for women, we need a clear understanding of our goals. We keep coming back to their definition and assessment of how well we achieve them. Furthermore, we need to understand them to communicate our purposes and accomplishments to the public, prospective students, funding agencies, governmental agencies and sponsors.

DISCUSSIONS AMONG SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS

Following the discussion among the panel and the colloquium participants, smaller meetings by institutional type were held to provide direct and specific conversations about shared interests and problems. The following section summarizes those meetings.

Liberal Arts Colleges

The participants began with the question of how their institutions can prove that they add value to what their students already know and can do when they enter college--what do they learn about their fields of study, about themselves, and about their relationships with others? Some comments favored comparisons with persons with similar backgrounds who do not attend college. Another approach is to use checkpoints--of freshmen, in course, and upon graduation. Marymount Manhattan College, a Task Force member, is considering the use of essays by freshmen about what they want to do in college. The essay could be used as a basis for academic advisement to help students identify their skills and enlarge on them. Such plans would be updated as a student's plans change.

The previous forum had spoken on preparing students to cope with the ambiguity they will face, and this group discussed students' need to reconsider values which they brought with them to college. Another question might be to determine how well graduates are able to exercise autonomy. The group listed graduates' benevolent influence on society as a goal which should be assessed. It also acknowledged serendipitous learning, which cannot be planned but can be overlooked in assessment.

When questioned about the objectivity of the case-study method, representatives from Marymount Manhattan said they found they had gathered some valuable information for planning purposes from a few people. The same sort of method was used at Empire State College, where no attempt was made to get a representative sample. In one self-assessment effort, the College sought students who tested the program in significant ways and asked what contribution the College had to make to one or another distinctive kind of student. The data was useful, in turn, for other students who wanted to know what Empire State could offer them. These and other kinds of data were also valuable in convincing faculty of the need for certain institutional changes.

Large Colleges and Universities

Departments, with their loyalties to their disciplines, often stand in the way of institutional goal-setting. Another problem is getting agreement on the use of resources--each department has set its own priorities. Data can be useful in support of institutional priorities, but they are also open to self-serving interpretations, especially if there is a surfeit of data. Built into every self-assessment system must be a plan which prepares for the post-assessment stage, a plan for the use of findings.

Some participants wished to emphasize the positive results of self-assessment, not just the cautions. They noted that colleges which seek broad participation in this activity find it a significant vehicle for communication among separate units and individuals. Self-assessment also has side-effects, such as unexpected discoveries about curricula and institutional interests; self-assessment activity in one area can stimulate similar questioning in other parts of the college. Mainly, such efforts give confidence based on good judgments, rather than "shots in the dark." Even those who resist changes in priority are sometimes persuaded by self-assessment findings, especially if they are involved in the review process.

The question was raised whether colleges can insist on quality at the same time that they must search for means of sur-

vival. For instance, in order to meet enrollment quotas which are set by the budget or by a central office, a college can take in midyear transfers who may not meet the usual admissions standards. Or an excessive number of students can be taken into a popular program such as business in order to compensate for falling enrollments in other areas. Self-Assessment emphasizes institutional goals and thereby serves as a corrective to impulsive solutions for survival.

Two-Year Colleges

Participants here felt that we assess primarily for survival--it is a focus for self-assessors who must deal with financial and political realities, as well as with curricular improvement. Self-assessment findings and institutional responses to them show the community outside the college the value of education and what its loss would mean. Again, self-assessment should often lead to change. Those changes should in turn be noted as one indicator of the cost-effectiveness of self-assessment.

Another topic was the problem of objectivity--self-assessment may not be effective if it produces negative findings. An external perspective drawing on strong internal participation continues to be necessary. It helps to protect the integrity of the institution.

Technical Colleges

This group began with much discussion of the "Sine-wave" of interest in certain professional and career areas, especially in engineering. Self-assessment has been useful in understanding the needs in these areas and in establishing credibility among those who shape educational and manpower policies. Participants recognized in this regard that there is a significant difference in such activity between measurement and assessment, between quantification and judgment.

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

Our next speaker is distinguished by his knack for using his opportunities to improve the ways the State Education Department does its work. When we revised the Commissioner's Regulations, he saw to it that they stressed every opportunity for institutions to exercise their prerogatives. Many similar efforts show why I am not surprised that Al Lierheimer is encouraging colleges in New York to begin or to expand what they have already begun in self-assessment. Our project began as an attempt to enhance the Department's own accrediting function. If colleges would themselves develop objective systems to review their own programs for their own purposes, they would be much more likely to make use of their findings than if outsiders came in to tell them what they could already determine for themselves.

Al will speak to us this afternoon about the relationship between accreditation and this exercise of an important institutional prerogative, self-assessment.

Accreditation and Self-Assessment
by Alvin P. Lierheimer

What I'd like to do is to tell you a s story. I guess you could call it a fable, and it will have a moral, such as fables are supposed to have. The story goes this way.

Not too long ago there was a man named Dr. C. Willard Gamble who was appointed to the presidency of Sarah Nightingale College after a very distinguished career on the faculty of Midnorthern University. You know the business that college presidents have to have first names that are really someone's last name, and if they really want to rise they have to have a blank initial first. The trustees were pleased to attract someone who was educated at the finest eastern universities, and they took special notice when it became known that he had assisted the C.I.A. while on a fellowship in Paris during the student uprisings. Certainly such experience would be useful if the campus disruptions which were cropping up around the country ever came to Sarah Nightingale College.

For his part, Dr. Gamble was attracted by Sarah Nightingale's institutional characteristics:

It had an established reputation. As a matter of fact, Dr. Gamble's grandmother had been in the first graduating class,

It had 2,100 students, and as all of you know, the Chronicle says 2,000 is the critical mass for survival.

It was a women's college, and the C. in C. Willard Gamble stood for Casanova.

Sarah Nightingale concentrated on the liberal arts; Gamble himself was a philosopher.

Sarah Nightingale also offered study in education, and that was, in those days, a profession to fall back on.

Now it's a profession you could fall into.

And besides, the College had an endowment of $5,000,000 to support scholarships for students and sabbaticals for faculty.

Now President Gamble knew that he would immediately have to tackle the falling enrollment (from 2,800 students five years before). The drop accounted for the necessity in recent years to draw funds for endowment capital. Five years before, the endowment had been $6,000,000, and it dropped to $500,000 the year before, when the past president, a man named Maginot, left to join a research institute.

Dr. Gamble (I remind you that this is just a story.) thought he could trace the decline in students to the attraction of the nearby state university's strong, new program in physical education. Until five years before, Sarah Nightingale had averaged 100 phys. ed. majors, and now it had only 15, but that would only account for 85 of the students. While he still wondered how many students might have come to Sarah Nightingale College because of its phys. ed. program, if "state" had not started one two years ago, he told the Trustees that the answer really must lie much deeper, in the shifting interests of society.

Students wanted something practical, something that would get them jobs. The College only had its program in education to prepare students for a specific career, and it had always been a strong one. Then, too, the folkways of society had changed; even women didn't want to attend college only with women. The exchange program with the public institution was not enough. When Gamble arrived, he held meeting with student leaders, and the point that came up most frequently was co-education.

A man of decision, Gamble decided to

seek a grant, a planning grant. So he went to the offices of the Honeydew Brothers Foundation, and he asked for and eventually received seed money to develop the programs of Sarah Nightingale. He had already won Board approval to make the college co-educational, and he proposed to have programs which were attractive to men already underway when he announced this dramatic step--going co-ed.

The plan was to develop programs aimed toward careers, careers that women were beginning to enter, such as business. And with his background (in the C.I.A., remember), Gamble might even include a program in criminal justice, for there were federal funds available for that purpose. These new programs would build on the liberal arts, just as education did. Engineering would have to wait until after men actually arrived on campus. Such steps, Dr. Gamble knew, would make the College more comprehensive and thereby increase its enrollments, and by then it would be time to rename it Nightingale University and open graduate programs.

If you'll hang in there, you'll probably see why this is related to assessment.

President Gamble's college did increase its enrollments to 4,500 students at its peak; 950 of them were men. He was surprised how much of his effort went into the building of new facilities for the influx of students. Each time a new program opened, he noticed a sudden jump in staffing which was really greater than he had anticipated. This was especially noticeable when the planning grant ran out. But he realized that this was the cost of quality. He did notice that there was also a slight drop in enrollments in other programs. He reminded himself of the effects of declining birthrates on college enrollments.

And he could point with pride to the graduate programs in business, education, far-eastern studies, English, History, music and studio art. The latter two, music and art, had been built on undergraduate programs that existed when he came, as had the one in education. Of course it was only logical for the flourishing undergraduate business program to go to the graduate level, though graduate enrollments were still modest. Of greater concern were the shrinking enrollments, even at the undergraduate level, in history and English. His most immediate problem in the program area was what to do now that the internationally famous scholar he had attracted by establishing the Nightingale Far Eastern Institute had gone to Columbia. The Institute had given the University distinction. The University had retained the Nightingale name when an heir to the family stepped forward to endow the Institute's chair.

But President Gamble had even more pressing problems. The slow growth in admissions of men and dwindling of endowment to $800,000 finally discouraged the Trustees from equipping the engineering building. You see the cards beginning to change. It became simply the Maginot Graduate Center, and for a while part-time graduate enrollments climbed further, although total FTE numbers were falling. When the accrediting commission visited Nightingale, it questioned the continuance of some of these programs, for they contained too few students at the combined undergraduate and graduate levels to reach an acceptable level of quality. The accrediting team asked, in its kindly fashion, if the University could really support 22 programs.

President Gamble was astonished, for enrollments had already fallen from their peak to below 4,000 and to discontinue any program would reduce them even further. He stoutly maintained to the Trustees that the University did need diversity to meet the needs of new student populations. Nevertheless, the Trustees suggested that it might be better, in the face of uncontrollable costs, to propose that the University become part of the public university. That was a bitter pill for Will Gamble. He noticed, nevertheless, that merger with State would enhance his plan to reactivate the program in physical education, only this time at the graduate level, and the Far Eastern Institute

might flourish still, if there was an infusion of state money. Before the Trustees reached a decision on these matters, President Gamble resigned to become a program officer at the Honeydew Foundation.

* * *

Now that's the end of the story, and though a moral is customary at the end of a fable, I will try instead to voice some of the questions that have occurred to you as we went along. First, how could a distinguished scholar abandon research when it came to asking questions about his own institution's vital concerns? He and his trustees addressed the facts only after they became serious problems.

Another question. What attracted Gamble to these untested, popular notions?

Third, why didn't the President project to their conclusion the consequences of increasing enrollments and programs, of adopting this comprehensive mission of a public competitor, even of accepting outside subsidies without understanding the burden they would impose when the funding ceased?

Another question, what made Gamble place his preoccupation with the competition in the marketplace above his concern for quality? His reluctance to assess the quality and the need of programs already undertaken or to heed the findings of others may have defeated his own efforts to attract students.

You could, I'm sure, raise more and better questions even without knowing any more about Sarah Nightingale than I told you, and what you don't know you could make up.

* * *

I want to stress the importance of thorough, objective self-assessment. The accreditation process includes a self-study, but it is an infrequent exercise. Some of the most serious institutional problems are not discovered soon enough through the traditional accreditation process. Attitudes on campus toward accreditation are sometimes too negative to depend upon it for preventative measures. The periodic upheaval an institution goes through to unearth information and insights about itself for purposes of accreditation cannot serve both short- and long-term planning. The visitation too often comes after the crucial events.

We therefore need continuous self-assessment to weigh the value of both new and established programs. Such review is for the institution's academic and fiscal health, and only incidentally for the purposes of accreditation. Rather than a periodic upheaval to serve external demands, all of the people who are concerned with the quality of their academic program need a sustained understanding of what is happening and what they are achieving.

I hope to see a day when self-assessment could be a methodical, continuous process sustained by the colleges for their own purposes. Information would be gathered and analyzed routinely, and the colleges would make decisions and act on the basis of cogent findings. Such findings would provide a dependable base for institutional development, and a pool of data would be available to make special studies easier and more accurate than they now are.

But there are some cautions, too. When we flirt with the idea of including this approach to self-assessment in the accreditation process, I don't believe for a minute that it will displace what we now have. The Regents' project on self-assessment has shown that outside intervention in the process is valuable in many ways. Colleges do well to build such a stimulus into their own self-assessment systems. Colleges have long had boards of visitors, often alumni who have distinguished themselves as scholars. They can also involve trustees and students in the process. And I hope that accrediting agencies can base accreditation at least partly on self-assessment

systems which they themselves have approved at the colleges they serve. The colleges, in turn, should plan for the best possible use of the accreditors' intervention in their self-assessment systems.

I told you I would be brief. I appreciate your patience in listening to my fable and to the moral lesson for the day. I hope that none of you found that the analogy was uncomfortably biographical. The point of the story was certainly clear enough. In conclusion, I thank you for your continued interest in this project. I'm pleased for the opportunity to be with you here.

SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHOPS

The workshops covered subjects in which the participants had shown interest before the Colloquium. Moderators posed questions or presented materials related to these major concerns of self-assessment.

Program Reorganization and Staff Development

Moderator: Ronald C. Brach
Assisting: Ernest G. Palola

Institutions need methods and procedures to change themselves from within. Through long-range planning they can anticipate their requirements and resolve reorganization problems. If they identify or foresee underenrolled programs which must be terminated but are taught by tenured faculty, they can help those faculty who wish to retrain themselves, and they can take advantage of opportunities for shifting priorities by anticipating retirements. A program planning and evaluation committee needs to know such things in order to make the crucial link between planning and evaluation.

The question was posed whether we can equate survival with quality in self-assessment, a point considered at the morning meeting of large institutions. One answer was to take the institutional master plan off the shelf, in order to develop priorities for reorganization. More people need to be involved in the decision-making process, in order to reach understanding and agreement about their reactions to the problems and about the alternatives of their solution. One person noted that understanding of alternatives motivates almost as much as the problem Samuel Johnson described: The sentence of hanging has a wonderful way of clearing the mind and concentrating it on the problem at hand.

One point about ownership of self-assessment is that the persons whom it affects should not be deluded into thinking they have control of the decisions which result from self-assessment. if they don't. While self-assessment cannot produce needed change if it does not have support from the top administrative offices, those offices also should not second-guess appropriate local decisions, nor should central university or Departmental offices do so. To avoid this last danger, all parties need continuous communication on key issues--all parties need to act in concert.

Planning is therefore a way to get intelligent discussion going among faculty of the options open to them, including the conditions placed upon them by policies or budgets, and the facts which they face. Each party must know his or

her role in the planning process. Only an open system such as this allows an ethical response to the realities of reorganization.

Identifying Goals and the Value of a Data Base

Moderator: William Dempsey
Assisting: Bruce Dearing

William Dempsey urged self-assessment by colleges because of their accountability for the education of our society. While colleges are under pressure to quantify their results, in order to measure the costs of their work, they must also balance this concern for efficiency with evidence of the quality of the changes they achieve. The goals of a college set a standard by which to measure this quality, whereas costing which uses a limited kind of data can control academic programs without measuring quality.

One participant saw goal setting and master planning as a mechanism for debate and a continuing process of self-examination. Another observed that the colloquy had cited two approaches to goal setting: a prescriptive method to which the institution conforms, and a developmental or inductive method which identifies what the college is and does best. He acknowledged the value of intuitive judgements, but he found they were made better with than without data. Such data should be linked to the institution's self-defined needs and problems.

Participants agreed that the current, proxy measures of quality need to be modified. One noted that development of a satisfying lifestyle may have as much or more value than a high salary. Another urged that colleges stress to students a wide range of possible accomplishments besides those which are job-related. Development of critical thinking and other general skills are quantifiable educational changes. Another participant expressed interest in developing a system of self-assessment by each student, and a Task Force member cited such efforts in career planning at Marymount Manhattan.

Developing a Continuous Assessment System

Moderator: Charles W. Meinert

Participants generally agreed that it was difficult to make many assessment activities continuous, particularly those which involve faculty participation. Several suggestions which enhance continuing self-assessment were offered:

1. Make the committee or faculty group part of the regular governance system.

2. Rotate primary responsibility among a wide segment of the faculty. Do not continue to depend upon the same key faculty until their interest flags.

3. Accord status and importance to the task, beginning with the president's office, and acknowledge the contributions of those engaged in it.

4. Seek to tap the academic expertise and interests of faculty that can be related to assessment activities.

5. Provide administrative support for self-assessment activities by high quality institutional research capabilities and basic data.

6. Establish different levels of assessment so some can be completed in a reasonably short time and provide a sense of achievement. Other areas are more reasonably reviewed over a longer period of time.

Curricular Review with Emphasis on Outcomes

Moderator: Richard Alfred
Assisting: F. Gordon Lindsey

Richard Alfred outlined a model of outcome measures that was used as a guide when New York City Community College was forced to cut its programs drastically during the severe retrenchments by the City University. He stressed the necessity of basing judgements on a wide range of variables, such as enrollments, costs, market situation, uniqueness. In order to avoid leaving such determinations to those with vested interests, his office gathered the information and referred the data to the curriculum committee, which in turn referred it to the president for the final decisions. Participants recognized the importance of gaining consensus in the institution regarding what outcome measures should be adopted.

The group approved Alfred's method of gathering data and the need to base decisions on a variety of revealing facts, but they also agreed that career programs more easily lend themselves to measurement of effectiveness than do liberal arts programs. Mainly the group recognized the difficulty of measuring liberal arts goals, especially in such areas as appreciation of literature and the arts, enhancement of humanistic values, sensitivity to interpersonal relationships. In assessing liberal arts colleges, the program-by-program evaluation may not be as appropriate as assessing the overall performance of the college.

Cost analysis is as important as quality assessment. The problem in retrenchment is making expedient changes that will affect quality in the future, such as cutting back on the maintenance and acquisition of equipment, hiring part-time faculty as stop-gap measures, and so on. The assessment of trends is important not only at times of fiscal crisis to determine what programs should be cut, but it is a valuable mechanism to alert administrators to developing weaknesses that should be remedied in time to keep programs healthy.

Self-assessment is here to stay. When financial pressures relax, it will be called on less and less. As the economy worsens, self-assessment will be called back into use periodically in the future. The management of decline is difficult but can be handled with the help of effective self-assessment. The larger direction of policy in New York State, however, has been irrational in the allocation of resources. The wish was expressed that political policymakers base their decisions on empirical data.

Gathering Institutional Support for Self-Assessment

Moderator: Joseph Burke
Assisting: Robert A. Plane

When SUNY at Binghamton, a Task Force college, was first faced with mandated cutbacks, the University used quantitative data, such as the number of students and the number of majors in a program to guide its decisions for termination. Much other data that might have been useful was not available from the Office

of Institutional Research. Now that a University Evaluator has been appointed, a much more sophisticated assessment system will support such decision in the future.

Again the question was raised whether self-assessment of quality can be separated from the issue of survival--Must it always be a threat? A response was that separation of the two is impossible, as long as something is to be dropped. Still, there must be a positive way to capitalize on mutuality of interests. The faculty need to see this. If they don't sense the realities around them, external pressure must be applied to motivate them. Still, it takes time to get used to the idea of assessment, and departments only see their part of the whole. Those responsible for self-assessment should give information and data to all departments, so that they can learn to work with it, and they should not keep data from one another.

One participant asserted that competition among departments is destructive, as is taking data too seriously. The reply was that the worst thing is uncertainty. Faculty need to know that this is a new era, so the first thing to deal with is the level of faculty awareness by laying all the information out, not holding anything back.

Another observed that it sounded as though the group was not interested in self-assessment per se, but in budgets. Some felt the two were inseperable; another urged that the pie should be enlarged by using self-assessment to sell the institution. All departments have some strengths, and self-assessment will bring that out. Departments present themselves well only if they know their strengths. Further institutional self-assessment can be reassuring to outsiders such as politicians.

The workshop concluded with a concern that the leitmotif of survival which had appeared more than once during the day also pervaded many of these remarks. I is too bad that this issue is so dominant, for there are, after all, other good reasons for self-assessment.

CONCLUSION OF THE COLLOQUIUM

by Donald Tritschler
Project Director

Before I urge you to carry the words of this Colloquium and some of your own plans for self-assessment back to your campuses, let me summarize some main points of our discussions today.

Summary of the Colloquium

That self-assessment is here to stay, no one seemed to doubt, especially since the motivating force that suddenly made it current is not likely to go away in the near future. Several of the groups asked if self-assessment of quality can be taken out of the context of survival, and they agreed we must depend upon our professionalism to support academic quality. We must ask if we can justify survival on the basis of the quality we find. In order to support that quality, we need to find ways to measure it, but we must also find ways to put our findings to use.

Still, we need to know what quality is. Some said we can't measure quality unless we have clear goals as standards of measurement. Self-assessment can be an inductive way of discovering those goals; at least it is a way to find out which

ones are no longer valid. Beyond that, we need to know who wants to know about what kind of quality--quality is relative to those who need to know, as well as to the goals we seek to achieve. Sometimes self-assessment helps us explain our goals to outsiders who need assurance about the institutions they support. Surely it can make insiders more aware of the eventualities they must prepare for. At least one group found self-assessment a way to stir up education, a way to reconsider what we do.

Several of you asked to consider the positive results of self-assessment, not just the threats it represents to the faculty, or the means it offers to help keep the wolf from the door. Some mentioned what I have seen during this first year of our project, what I have had the pleasure of watching on the 15 Task Force campuses. I have seen much new communication going on, signs which didn't exist before, because people were getting involved with one another's concerns. Another thing is the side-effects of self-assessment: the Task Force colleges have discovered things about themselves that they didn't realize, they have come to some conclusions that they didn't expect, or they have found some method so useful that they decided to try it in another area that was not part of the project.

One final point we should remember is that we have been talking about the outcomes of education and putting the stress there. This is a new trend in evaluation of postsecondary programs. In the traditional accreditation method we have looked at what was put into the effort, but now we are looking much more at what we accomplish.

The Future of Self-Assessment

Now I should like to prepare for continued communication with you about self-assessment. I would like especially to hear from you or from others who commence it or who prepare for ways to make it a continuous process on their campuses. I want to know from you what you decide to take up. I also want you to know what the project has for you.

We know and have some access to dependable consultative resources--people whose services we have used and lists of people in the project. You've become acquainted with some of the Task Force members today and you'll find out more about their projects in our PS reprint. If you are planning to work in areas which are similar to theirs, you'll know that we have experience which may be helpful to you. I cannot commit Task Force members' time to you, but they are eager to learn about self-assessment--they came here today as learners, as well as to help in the development of self-assessment--and you may be able to gain their interest in your concerns. The project office also has information about self-assessment beyond the project which we would be glad to share with you or refer you to.

When this Colloquium to develop interest in self-assessment outside the project was planned, we thought that many of you might be able to get something underway by the beginning of the year. We also anticipated that by spring you would be far enough into it to develop specific questions and identify problems, so we planned to hold workshops in the eastern and western parts of the State. Perhaps you will have people on your campus who need greater exposure to the concept and the benefits of such work and you'll want to bring them. We expect to have case studies from our own project, as well as materials and expertise from elsewhere.

We also have the start of a clearinghouse of information on self-assessment. We have bibliographies, reprints, books and people we can refer you to and models

of self-assessment. We are interested in the information you need, and perhaps we have it or can help you find it.

If you undertake self-assessment or are already doing it, please let us know. We may be able to help you, and we would surely like to know how attractive the idea is to you. We see nearly one-fifth of New York's 248 degree-granting institutions here today. I will be curious to know what your accomplishments are. I suggest that you review our Guidelines for Self-Assessment and begin to apply those that seem to "fit" on your own campuses. They will help you in getting your work started or may give a new idea to aid you in continuing it. The Task Force has used them through the year, we have experience with them, we have revised them a couple of times since the project began, and I have asked for your comments on them in the evaluation questionnaire for this Colloquium. I will appreciate your suggestions for their improvement as you use them, too.

The Guidelines suggest that you involve your colleagues in the development of continuous self-assessment systems. I think you will make a good beginning if your top academic officers give self-assessment strong support, and that means budgetary as well as psychological support. Perhaps the people on your campuses can be involved in the selection of areas of self-assessment and the information they will need to do it objectively. If you can make a beginning or plan for coordination of what you are already doing, if you can identify those key persons who will be responsible for self-assessment on your campus by January, the spring workshops should be helpful to you.

I think you all for coming today, and I hope we will be able to help you to develop self-assessment in the future.

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